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CLAIMS:

What is claimed is:

- 1 1. A method for answering a wireless telephone, the
2 method comprising:
3 receiving an incoming call;
4 responsive to a determination that automatic call
5 answering has been selected by a user, answering the
6 incoming call by providing the calling party with an
7 indication that the user will take the call momentarily
8 and placing the wireless telephone in mute mode until the
9 user has taken the incoming call.
- 1 2. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the
2 indication that the user will take the call momentarily
3 provides an indication to the calling party that the user
4 will be using a speech phrase generator to conduct a
5 conversation.
- 1 3. The method as recited in claim 2, further
2 comprising:
3 providing audio of the calling party to the user;
4 and
5 responsive to selection of a speech phrase by the
6 user, sending a speech phrase to the calling party.
- 1 4. The method as recited in claim 3, wherein the speech
2 phrase is prerecorded.

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1 5. The method as recited in claim 3, wherein the speech
2 phrase is generated using a voice generation unit.

1 6. The method as recited in claim 1, further
2 comprising:
3 notifying the user of the incoming call; and
4 presenting the user with options as to how to
5 dispose of the call.

1 7. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the
2 options include allowing automatic call answering to
3 answer the incoming call and at least one of allowing the
4 user to answer the incoming call, allowing voice mail to
5 take the incoming call, and allowing the incoming call to
6 go unanswered.

1 8. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the step
2 of providing the calling party with an indication that
3 the user will take the call momentarily includes sending
4 a voice message to the calling party.

1 9. The method as recited in claim 8, wherein the voice
2 message is a prerecorded message.

1 10. The method as recited in claim 8, wherein the voice
2 message is generated by a voice generation unit.

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1 11. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the step
2 of providing the calling party with an indication that
3 the user will take the call momentarily includes sending
4 a text message to the calling party.

1 12. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the step
2 of providing the calling party with an indication that
3 the user will take the call momentarily comprises a
4 selectable message selected from a plurality of possible
5 messages.

1 13. The method as recited in claim 12, wherein the
2 selectable message is selected based on the identity of
3 the calling party.

1 14. The method as recited in claim 12, wherein the
2 selectable message is selected based on the time.

1 15. The method as recited in claim 12, wherein the
2 selectable message is selected by the user.

1 16. A computer program product in a computer readable
2 media for use in a wireless telephone for answering the
3 wireless telephone, the computer program product
4 comprising:

5 first instructions for receiving an incoming call;
6 second instructions, responsive to a determination
7 that automatic call answering has been selected by a
8 user, for answering the incoming call by providing the

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1 calling party with an indication that the user will take
2 the call momentarily and placing the wireless telephone
3 in mute mode until the user has taken the incoming call.

1 17. The computer program product as recited in claim 16,
2 wherein the indication that the user will take the call
3 momentarily provides an indication to the calling party
4 that the user will be using a speech phrase generator to
5 conduct a conversation.

1 18. The computer program product as recited in claim 17,
2 further comprising:
3 third instructions for providing audio of the
4 calling party to the user; and
5 fourth instructions, responsive to selection of a
6 speech phrase by the user, for sending a speech phrase to
7 the calling party.

1 19. The computer program product as recited in claim 18,
2 wherein the speech phrase is prerecorded.

1 20. The computer program product as recited in claim 18,
2 wherein the speech phrase is generated using a voice
3 generation unit.

1 21. The computer program product as recited in claim 16,
2 further comprising:
3 third instructions for notifying the user of the
4 incoming call; and

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5 fourth instructions for presenting the user with
6 options as to how to dispose of the call.

1 22. The computer program product as recited in claim 16,
2 wherein the options include allowing automatic call
3 answering to answer the incoming call and at least one of
4 allowing the user to answer the incoming call, allowing
5 voice mail to take the incoming call, and allowing the
6 incoming call to go unanswered.

1 23. The computer program product as recited in claim 16,
2 wherein the instructions for providing the calling party
3 with an indication that the user will take the call
4 momentarily includes sending a voice message to the
5 calling party.

1 24. The computer program product as recited in claim 23,
2 wherein the voice message is a prerecorded message.

1 25. The computer program product as recited in claim 23,
2 wherein the voice message is generated by a voice
3 generation unit.

1 26. The computer program product as recited in claim 16,
2 wherein the instructions for providing the calling party
3 with an indication that the user will take the call
4 momentarily includes sending a text message to the
5 calling party.

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1 27. The computer program product as recited in claim 16,
2 wherein the instructions for providing the calling party
3 with an indication that the user will take the call
4 momentarily comprises a selectable message selected from
5 a plurality of possible messages.

1 28. The computer program product as recited in claim 27,
2 wherein the selectable message is selected based on the
3 identity of the calling party.

1 29. The computer program product as recited in claim 27,
2 wherein the selectable message is selected based on the
3 time.

1 30. The computer program product as recited in claim 27,
2 wherein the selectable message is selected by the user.

1 31. A wireless telephone, the wireless telephone
2 comprising:
3 a receiver which receives an incoming call;
4 an automatic answering unit which, responsive to a
5 determination that automatic call answering has been
6 selected by a user, answers the incoming call by
7 providing the calling party with an indication that the
8 user will take the call momentarily and placing the
9 wireless telephone in mute mode until the user has taken
10 the incoming call.

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1 32. The wireless telephone as recited in claim 31,
2 wherein the indication that the user will take the call
3 momentarily provides an indication to the calling party
4 that the user will be using a speech phrase generator to
5 conduct a conversation.

1 33. The wireless telephone as recited in claim 32,
2 further comprising:
3 a speaker which provides audio of the calling party
4 to the user; and
5 a speech generator which, responsive to selection of
6 a speech phrase by the user, sends a speech phrase to the
7 calling party.

1 34. The wireless telephone as recited in claim 33,
2 wherein the speech phrase is prerecorded.

1 35. The wireless telephone as recited in claim 33,
2 wherein the speech phrase is generated using a voice
3 generation unit.

1 36. The wireless telephone as recited in claim 31,
2 further comprising:
3 a call notification unit which notifies the user of
4 the incoming call; and
5 an option presentation unit which presents the user
6 with options as to how to dispose of the call.

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1 37. The wireless telephone as recited in claim 31,
2 wherein the options include allowing automatic call
3 answering to answer the incoming call and at least one of
4 allowing the user to answer the incoming call, allowing
5 voice mail to take the incoming call, and allowing the
6 incoming call to go unanswered.

1 38. The wireless telephone as recited in claim 31,
2 wherein the instructions for providing the calling party
3 with an indication that the user will take the call
4 momentarily includes sending a voice message to the
5 calling party.

1 39. The wireless telephone as recited in claim 38,
2 wherein the voice message is a prerecorded message.

1 40. The wireless telephone as recited in claim 38,
2 wherein the voice message is generated by a voice
3 generation unit.

1 41. The wireless telephone as recited in claim 31,
2 wherein providing the calling party with an indication
3 that the user will take the call momentarily includes
4 sending a text message to the calling party.

1 42. The wireless telephone as recited in claim 31,
2 wherein providing the calling party with an indication

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3 that the user will take the call momentarily comprises a
4 selectable message selected from a plurality of possible
5 messages.

1 43. The wireless telephone as recited in claim 42,
2 wherein the selectable message is selected based on the
3 identity of the calling party.

1 44. The wireless telephone as recited in claim 42,
2 wherein the selectable message is selected based on the
3 time.

1 45. The wireless telephone as recited in claim 42,
2 wherein the selectable message is selected by the user.

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